



**UK All-Party Parliamentary Group
Study Tour to Sierra Leone Report
November 5-13, 2016**



Study Tour

Members of the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) traveled to Sierra Leone to embark on a study tour focusing on reproductive health and family planning from 5 November to 13 November. The delegates visited a variety of services at various levels of the health system, with actors including the British High Commission, UK Aid, WHO, NGOs and the Government.

The APPG on Population, Development, and Reproductive Health is a cross-party platform for Peers and MPs in the UK to raise awareness on key development and rights issues, with a specific focus on population and sexual and reproductive health and rights. The group was established in 1979 and is one of the oldest APPGs in Westminster. It has more than 70 members with representation from all major political parties, and from both Houses in the UK Parliament.

Reproductive health and family planning



The visiting Parliamentarians included:

- **Baroness Tonge:** Jennifer Louise Tonge, The Baroness Tonge joined the House of Lords in 2005, and was previously MP for Richmond Park. She serves on the HIV and AIDS Committee in the United Kingdom, the EU Sub-Committee – Foreign Affairs, and the International Development Committee. She trained to be a doctor at University College Hospital, gaining an MB and BS. Baroness Tonge is the Chairperson of the APPG.
- **Lord Hussain:** Qurban Hussain, the Lord Hussain has been a member of the House of Lords since 2011, and previously served as Councillor for Luton. He serves on the Extradition Law Committee. His political interests include business, industry and consumers, communities and families, employment and training, and international affairs.
- **Liz McInnes, MP:** Liz McInnes has been the MP for Heywood and Middleton since 2014. She is Shadow Minister for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, and was previously Shadow Minister for Communities and Local Government. Ms. McInnes serves on the Science and Technology Committee and the Health Committee. She studied biochemistry at the University of Oxford and completed a master's degree at the University of Surrey.
- **Baroness Sheehan:** Shaista Ahmed Sheehan, The Baroness Sheehan joined the House of Lords in 2015, and previously served as Councillor for Kew from 2006 to 2010. She serves on the EU Energy and Environment Sub-Committee.

The APPG was accompanied by Ms. Ann Mette Kjaerby, Parliamentary and Policy Advisor for the APPG since 2001. She has been trained and worked as both a registered nurse and a registered midwife. She holds an MA in Medical Ethics & Law from King's College, University of London, and an MSc in Public Health in Developing Countries from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.







Saturday, November 5

The Parliamentarians arrived in the evening and were warmly welcomed by Dr. Kim Eva Dickson, the UNFPA Country Representative, and additional country office staff who accompanied them to their hotel.



Sunday, November 6

The visiting UK Parliamentarians visited the residence of the British High Commissioner to Sierra Leone, Guy Warrington. The Parliamentarians and the High Commissioner discussed public health in Sierra Leone, including issues such as Ebola, family planning, and maternal health. The group then received a comprehensive briefing kit (see annex 4) which they reviewed in preparation for the week's activities.





Monday, November 7

The group visited the UNFPA office, where they received a security briefing from a UN security expert. They also received a full briefing about the country context including an overview of key reproductive health indicators and the work of the UNFPA office.

The Parliamentarians then visited the Princess Christian Maternity Hospital, the largest maternity hospital in Sierra Leone. There they met with key staff and saw the antenatal clinic and labour ward. They also visited the National School of Midwifery and the Nurse Anesthetists' School, two important institutions for training local staff to reduce maternal mortality nationwide. Also on Monday they made a courtesy call to the Sierra Leone Minister of Health, Dr. Abu Bakar Fofanah, where they discussed key issues regarding reproductive health and family planning in the country.



Tuesday, November 8

At a visit to Aberdeen Women's Centre, the group learned more about outreach and surgical repair for women suffering from fistula, a devastating childbirth injury. A group of women were present at the Centre, waiting for fistula surgery, and they sang and interacted with the Parliamentarians. Then they stopped at the local Planned Parenthood (PPASL) Clinic and Outreach services in the Dwarzak community, where local men and women access family planning options and maternal health services. They also met a local Member of Parliament at the outreach service site who supports the family planning efforts.

The group met with UK Secretary of State for International Development, Ms. Priti Patel, and top advisors from DFID. The Group discussed the health systems challenges in SL with Ms Patel. They finished the day by observing a session of the Girls' Club in Rokel, where adolescent girls learn life skills and are mentored to make healthy choices. The girls discussed the topic of "courage" and mentioned Malala's inspiring life story.

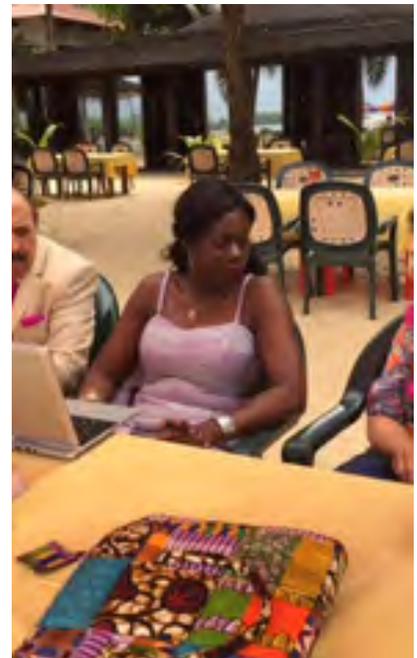


Wednesday, November 9

The delegates then traveled to Makeni, where they met members of the FINE Sierra Leone Husbands' School and other community leaders including religious and traditional leaders. In this group men are encouraged to learn more about sexual and reproductive health and to advocate against harmful traditional practices, such as child marriage and FGM/C. There is also a FINE-led programme to bring couples together to discuss their relationships and other issues including STI awareness and treatment. The group heard from a schoolgirl who was rescued from a child marriage by the Husbands' School; the girl has now nearly completed her secondary studies.

Also in Makeni, the delegates visited the local School of Midwifery, where students are learning to save the lives of women and children. Started in 2010, the School of Midwifery's curriculum and students are supported by UNFPA. More than 60 midwives will graduate from the school in November 2016. At Marie Stopes Clinic, the group learned about their sexual and reproductive health services, as well as their programme for cervical cancer detection and treatment.

Also on Wednesday, two additional Parliamentarians joined the tour.



Thursday, November 10

The newly arrived members of the APPG visited the PPASL Clinic and Outreach services in the morning. Then the whole AGPPG group met up and visited with members of the Sierra Leone Parliament, and discussed topics such as the Abortion Bill and efforts to end harmful traditional practices. The Sierra Leonean Parliamentarians also discussed their “Agenda for Prosperity” for the country’s development.

The group then visited the offices of Statistics Sierra Leone, where the 2015 Population and Housing Census is being completed and disseminated. The Census collected a wide range of demographic and socioeconomic data, and for the first time in the country, data on Maternal Mortality and Ebola socioeconomic impacts.



Friday, November 11

The group had a series of debriefs with UNFPA, the UN Resident Coordinator, and the British High Commission. They also attended the National Advisory Committee Meeting on Gender-Based Violence with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs.



Saturday, November 12

The remaining Parliamentarians visited Aberdeen Women's Centre and Princess Christian Maternity Hospital, and saw another session of the girls' club in Newton.



Sunday, November 13

The two remaining Parliamentarians were given a formal briefing on the UNFPA Country Programme and a background briefing on Sierra Leone. The group had a lunch with the British High Commission for Remembrance Day before departing to the airport, where they received a fond farewell from UNFPA staff.



Annexes

Annex 1 Study Tour Schedule

Annex 2 Site Profiles

Annex 3 Country Office Brochure

Annex 4 Briefing Kit Contents

Photo credit: Sulaiman Stephens

Annex 1

Programme Study Tour 5th-13th November 2016



DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	KEY PERSONS TO BE MET
Saturday, November 5		Arrival at airport and drop-off at the Sea Coach Express	Lungi International Airport Lungi, Port Loko District	Ms. Tina Davies – Project Coordinator Ms. Genevieve Taylor – PA to the Representative Mr. Alhaji Lamin Turay - UN Airport Facilitator
		Pickup in Freetown and drop off at the Radisson Blu Hotel	17 Lumley Beach Road Aberdeen, Freetown	Dr. Kim Eva Dickson- Representative UNFPA Drivers: Mr. Mohammed Sangarie Mr. Abdulai Kamara
Sunday, November 6	11:00 – 12:00	Courtesy call to the British High Commissioner and Head of DFID	British High Commissioner's Residence Hill Station	Ms. Tina Davies– Project Coordinator Dr. Mohamed Elhassein – Reproductive Health Technical Specialist Dr. Kim Eva Dickson- Representative Ms. Amy Auguston – Communications Consultant
	12:30 – 13:00	Study Tour briefing and review of UNFPA Welcome Pack	Radisson Blu	Dr. Kim Eva Dickson- Representative
Monday, November 7	9:00 am	Pickup from Hotel	Radisson Blu	UNFPA Drivers
	9:30 - 10:30	UN Security briefing		Rajendra Joshi - Chief Security Adviser
	11:00 - 11:03	3 minutes silence in commoration of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) victims		
	11:05 – 12:00	UNFPA Country Programme Briefing	UNFPA 12/16 New Signal Hill Road Congo Cross Freetown	UNFPA Cluster Leads Mr. Ibrahim Kamara – Assistant Representative Ms. Lucy Kadewere – International Operations Manager Mr. Mohammed Laghdaf Cheikh Malainine- Chief Technical Advisor Census Dr. Mohammed Elhassein – Reproductive Health Technical Specialist Ms. Betty Alpha – Gender Specialist
	<i>On monday 7th all flags within the country will fly at half mast and there will be a nationwide silence in commoration of the victims of EVD after which the President will speak to the nation</i>			

Programme Study Tour

5th-13th November 2016



DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	KEY PERSONS TO BE MET
Monday, November 7	12:00 – 13:00	Lunch at UNFPA		
	13:30 - 14:00	Courtesy call to the Minister of Health	Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS) 4th Floor Youyi Building, Freetown	Dr. Abu Bakarr Fofanah – Minister of Health and Sanitation
	15:00 -17 :00	Visit to the Princess Christian Maternity Hospital (PCMH) Visit the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out patients Department • Antenatal Clinic • Labour Ward 		Ms. Margaret Mannah-MacCarthy, Country Midwife Advisor - UNFPA Dr. Sulaiman Conteh – MoHS Programme Manager, Reproductive Health Programme
		Visit the National School of Midwifery	Fourah Bay Road, Freetown	Dr. Koroma – Medical Superintendent, PCMH Hospital Dr. Joan Sheppard – Principal, Midwifery School, PCMH Dr. Michael Koroma - Head of Nurse Anaesthetists' School, PCMH
Tuesday, November 8	8:45 am	Pickup from Hotel	Radisson Blu	UNFPA Drivers
	09:00 -10 :30	Visit to Aberdeen Women's Centre to see Obstetric Fistula, Family Planning and Maternity Services	Aberdeen, Freetown	Mr. Augustine Kosia – CEO
				Ms. Ivy Kalama - Admin Director Dr. Lily Varghese - Surgeon
	11:00 -12 :30	Visit to Planned Parenthood Association Sierra Leone (PPASL) clinic and outreach services at Dwarzak to view provision of sexual and reproductive health services	Freetown	Mr. David Williams – Executive Director
	12:30-13:00	Lunch at Balmaya	Congo Cross, Freetown	
	13:45-14:45	Meeting with Secretary of State for International Development (30 mins) and briefing with BHC/ DFID	British High Commissioner's Residence Hill Station	
	15:00-16:30	Travel from Freetown to Rokel		
16:30 - 17:30	Visit to a Girls' Club to observe mentorship sessions managed by Restless Development	Rokel Western Rural	Ms. Sonia Gilroy– Programme Coordinator Mr. James Fofanah – Country Director Mr. Ibrahim Kamara - Field Officer	

Programme Study Tour

5th-13th November 2016



DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	KEY PERSONS TO BE MET
Wednesday, November 9	8:00 - 11:00	Travel from Freetown to Makeni	Makeni, Northern Region	UNFPA Drivers
	11:00 - 12:30	Visit to Fine Sierra Leone Husbands' School	Binkolo, Northern Region	Rev. George Buannie – Program Manager Mr. Mohamed A. Kamara - Programme Director Mr. Augustine Williams - Cluster Supervisor Mr. Suliaman Bangura - Centre Coordinator Mr. Usman Sesay - Office Assistant
	12:30 - 13:30	Visit to the School of Midwifery	Masuba, Makeni	Ms. Margaret Mannah-MacCarthy, Country Midwives Advisor, UNFPA Mrs. Frances Fornah - Principal of School
	13:30 - 14:30	Lunch at the School of Midwifery		
	15:00 - 17:00	Visit to Marie Stopes Clinic	7 Ladies Mile Makeni	Ms. Mamie Conteh – Regional Manager Mr. Adama Manga – Centre Manager
	Thursday, November 10	08:00 - 11:00	Travel from Makeni to Freetown	
8:00 am		Pick up from Hotel (Group 2)	Radisson Blu	UNFPA Drivers
09:00-10:30		Visit to Planned Parenthood Association Sierra Leone (PPASL) clinic and outreach services at Dwarzak to view provision of sexual and reproductive health services (Group 2)	Freetown	Mr. David Williams – Executive Director
11:30 - 13:00		Parliament visit	House of Parliament, Tower Hill Freetown	Hon. Dr Abdulai Sesay - Chair, Health Committee Hon. Helen Kuyembeh - Chair Parliamentary Action Group on Population and Development Hon. Hassan Sesay – Chair, Gender and Social Welfare Committee
13:30 - 14:30		Visit to Statistics Sierra Leone	A J Momoh Street, Tower Hill	Mr. Mohamed King Koroma - Director-General Mr. Mohamed Laghdaf Cheikh Malainine – UNFPA Chief Technical Adviser, Census
19:00 -22:00		Cocktail with key stakeholders	Radisson Blu Hotel	Invited MPs, Lawyers, Legislative Committee, Government Ministers, British High Commissioner, DFID, UN Country Team and Implementing Partners

DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	KEY PERSONS TO BE MET
Friday, November 11	8:30 am	Pickup from Hotel		UNFPA Drivers
	9:00 – 10:00	Debriefing with British High Commissioner	High Commission 6 Spur Road Freetown	High Commissioner
	10:30-11:30	Debriefing with UN Resident Coordinator	UNDP office, Wilkinson Road, Freetown	Mr. Sunil Saigal – Resident Coordinator
	11:30 – 13:00	Debriefing UNFPA	UNFPA	
	13:00	Light lunch		
	15:00	Departure to the Sea Coach Express Station (Group 1)	Radisson Blu Hotel	UNFPA Drivers
	15:00-17:00	Visit to Marie Stopes Clinic (Group 2)	Freetown	

DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	KEY PERSONS TO BE MET
Saturday, November 12	09:00 – 10:30	Visit to Aberdeen Women's Centre to see Obstetric Fistula, Family Planning and Maternity Services	Aberdeen, Freetown	Mr. Augustine Kosia – CEO Ms. Ivy Kalama - Admin Director Dr. Lily Varghese - Surgeon
	11:00-13:00	Visit to the Princess Christian Maternity Hospital (PCMH) Visit the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out patients Department • Antenatal Clinic • Labour Ward 	Fourah Bay Road, Freetown	Ms. Margaret Mannah-Macarthy, Country Midwife Advisor - UNFPA Matron Hossinatu Kanu- Chief nursing officer Matron Daphne Roberts- Matron, PCMH
	13:30-14:30	Lunch	Freetown	
	15:00-16:00	Travel to Newton		
	16:00-17:00	Visit to a Girls' Club to observe mentorship sessions, managed by Restless Development	Newton Western Rural	Ms. Sonia Gilroy– Programme Coordinator Mr. Ibrahim Kamara - Field Officer
	Sunday, November 13		Tour of Freetown - Historical sites	



Annex 2

Site profiles

National School of Midwifery - Monday, November 7

The National School of Midwifery, under the directive of the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, is a center of excellence for midwifery education in Sierra Leone. The mission of the School is to produce competent midwives offering skilled birth attendance and quality reproductive services to women, children, and communities in settings with various levels of care. The School is situated at the Princess Christian Maternity Hospital in Freetown. Since 2010, UNFPA has provided the school with technical and financial support. Also, with the introduction of the binding agreement by UNFPA and the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, each of the supported midwives (around forty per year) is required to work for at least three years in a public service delivery point in a rural community.

National Training of Nurse Anaesthetists Project - Monday, November 7

The National Training of Nurse Anaesthetic Project, solely funded by UNFPA, started in 2001 with the aim of training competent anaesthetic mid-level staff to provide quality anaesthetic services in hospitals around the country. Until now, anaesthesia has been one of the least advanced medical specialties in Sierra Leone with only one national anaesthetic physician who is supported by the graduates of this training program. Resuscitation of mothers' and newborn is frequently the responsibility of anaesthetist, making this specialization essential to reducing maternal and newborn mortality.

Aberdeen Women's Centre - Tuesday, November 8

The mission of Aberdeen Women's Centre (AWC) is to provide high quality holistic fistula treatment and maternity services, and also perform a small proportion of gynaecological surgeries for childbirth injuries. As part of the fistula prevention program, a new maternity unit composing of three delivery areas and eight antenatal and postnatal beds was opened in 2010. There is also a twelve bed ward available for overflow to either the treatment or prevention program, and two functioning operating theatres. AWC also has an outpatient children's clinic, which sees up to 1200 children each month. With support from UNFPA, AWC is reaching out to women at risk, providing family planning and emergency obstetric and neonatal care services as well as identifying women for corrective surgery. In 2015, more than 120 safe deliveries occurred monthly in the presence of trained medical staff and 119 fistula surgeries were performed.

Planned Parenthood Association of Sierra Leone (PPASL) - Tuesday, November 8

PPASL works to champion the advancement of sexual and reproductive health and rights and to enhance the provision of quality services for all, especially the underserved. Funded in part by UNFPA, PPASL provides family planning and safe motherhood services; adolescent and youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services; STI prevention and management; and HIV counselling and testing, among other programmes. In 2015, in partnership with UNFPA, PPASL expanded the programme to deliver integrated maternal health and family planning services targeting adolescent girls and young women.

Rokel Girls' Club - Tuesday, November 8

As part of a project funded by Irish Aid, Rokel community was mapped to identify and reach 15 of the most vulnerable girls. The safe space was selected by the girls and is a place where they feel physically and emotionally safe and where they enjoy the freedom to express themselves without the fear of judgment or harm. The girls' club meets three times per week to learn and share. In the safe space the girls are provided with opportunities for social participation, gaining life skills, leadership, and health information.

Fine Sierra Leone Husbands' School - Wednesday, November 9

UNFPA supported FINE Sierra Leone to establish three Male Peer Educators Network Centers in two districts that provide platforms for men to discuss issues like masculinity, patriarchal constructs, and harmful traditional beliefs and practices, such as Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting, early and forced marriage, and teenage pregnancy. To date, 335 Male Peer Educators were supported by UNFPA to lead 74 husbands' schools and 101 community mobilization outreach sessions. School sessions create opportunities for frank and open discussion on men's reproductive health challenges and HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness. Men also discuss their own issues and learn how certain constructs of "masculinity" can have negative health consequences.

School of Midwifery, Masuba, Makeni - Wednesday, November 9

The School of Midwifery was established in 2010 to meet increasing demands for practicing midwives to provide high quality maternity care. Since 2012, UNFPA provided technical and financial support to train community health nurses as midwives, focusing mainly on rural maternity care. In addition to providing scholarships to students, UNFPA has supported the revision of the school curriculum to include the most recent standards and to integrate sexual and reproductive health and the eradication of fistula and Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting. Each year the school produces 60 midwives and these graduate students are then required to work for the Sierra Leone Ministry of Health for four years.

Marie Stopes Clinic – Wednesday, November 9

Marie Stopes International is the largest non-governmental provider of family planning and sexual reproductive health services in Sierra Leone. Established in 1986, Marie Stopes Sierra Leone (MSSL) works with partners to reduce maternal mortality and ensure universal access to reproductive health and rights through expanding access to quality services. MSSL works to ensure that all women, particularly the poorest and hardest to reach, can access a full range of contraceptive services to enable them to choose the most appropriate method to meet their needs. MSSL also provides maternal and child health services, post abortion care and testing, and treatment of STIs. In 2016, MSSL began providing cervical cancer screening. In 2015, through UNFPA's support, MSSL reached more than 50,000 clients with sexual and reproductive health services; more than 4,000 clients received STI services; and more than 2,000 IUDs and nearly 6,000 implants were provided, with around 100,000 clients opting for short-term methods.

Statistics Sierra Leone - Thursday, November 10

Statistics Sierra Leone (SSL) conducts Population and Housing Censuses and collects, compiles, analyses and disseminates accurate, reliable and timely statistical information for informed decision-making by the government and the general public. The vision of SSL is to create a sustainable National Statistical System for the coordination and production of official statistics that will assist evidence-based decision-making. In 2015, UNFPA provided both financial and overall consultancy support in census organization; cartography; quality control and evaluation; data processing; management; and dissemination.

List of Delegates

1. Lord Qurban Hussain
2. Liz McInnes, MP
3. John Mann, MP
4. Baroness Shaista Ahmed Sheehan
5. Baroness Jenny Tonge
6. Karl Turner, MP
7. Ann Mette Kjaerby





UNFPA SIERRA LEONE at a Glance



// WHO WE ARE

UNFPA Sierra Leone is a principal actor and advocate that works to improve the health and well-being of all Sierra Leoneans, especially women and girls. Active in the country since 1971, UNFPA Sierra Leone provides the Government of Sierra Leone and other partners with comprehensive technical support to implement programmes and improve knowledge around sexual and reproductive health, gender equality, population issues, and adolescents and youth. Guided by the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UNFPA works to deliver its mandate as an international development agency that promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity.

// WHAT WE DO

UNFPA Sierra Leone supports the Government of Sierra Leone's efforts to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights and revitalize the health system in Sierra Leone, prioritizing mothers and their babies. With maternal death rates at crisis levels, UNFPA also supports the Government's health care initiatives to save the lives of women and newborns.

Currently in its sixth Country Programme Cycle, UNFPA Sierra Leone's key objectives include:

- Advancing sexual and reproductive health and strengthening family planning and newborn health
- Improving sexual and reproductive health of adolescents and young people, and delivering a comprehensive package of services for young people in-school and out-of-school
- Addressing women's and girls' inequality and discrimination through empowerment
- Promoting policies that address women and girls' sexual and reproductive health and GBV prevention, with support to victims and survivors
- Addressing data needs, including data use in governance, planning, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting at all levels

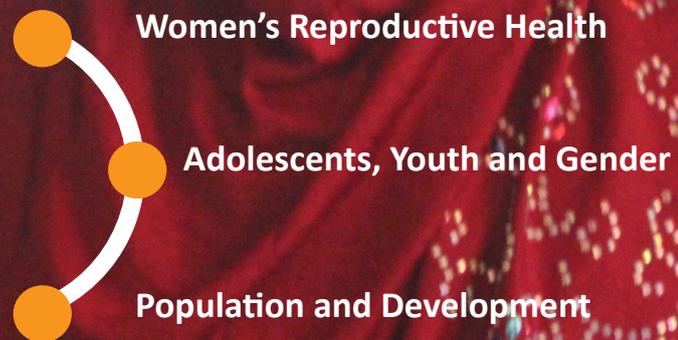
“ ... UNFPA delivers a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every child birth is safe, every young person's potential is fulfilled... ”

// CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Sierra Leone has a population of approximately 7 million people. Despite substantial economic growth in recent years, Sierra Leone continues to experience some of the world's most challenging health indicators. The country has one of the highest maternal mortality rates, an estimated 1,360 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. The total estimated number of maternal deaths in 2015 was 3,100, with teenagers accounting for forty percent. Teenage pregnancy is a pervasive problem: Nearly a third (28%) of adolescent girls ages 15-19 are already mothers or pregnant with their first child. Access to family planning services in Sierra Leone is low and the national contraceptive prevalence rate in 2013 was 16%.

Sierra Leone also has significant opportunities that can be harnessed to accelerate progress and sustainable development. In particular, nearly half of the country's population are young people. The Government of Sierra Leone has expressed great commitment towards improving maternal health and supporting mothers to survive. Strong partnerships also exist within the country to support the Government in the implementation of the National Health Recovery Plan, formulated following the Ebola outbreak.

// KEY PROGRAMME AREAS



// WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

SDG 3 declares that the highest attainable standard of health is a fundamental right of every person. Reaching this standard requires that health systems become more sensitive and responsive to women and girls' needs and wants, while offering higher quality and more comprehensive and accessible services.

To reduce the alarming rates of maternal mortality in Sierra Leone, UNFPA works closely with the Government to provide family planning services nationwide, taking special measures to reach those most marginalized. In addition to saving the lives of women and children, voluntary family planning helps to empower women and girls, reduce poverty, and ultimately build stronger nations. UNFPA supports programmes that improve access to and affordability of family planning services; offer a broad selection of choices; reflect high standards of care; are sensitive to cultural conditions; and address other reproductive health needs.

UNFPA Sierra Leone works to ensure safe birth and maternity services and improve the quality of basic and emergency obstetric care services. UNFPA also supports the Government's national efforts on health personnel training and capacity building, particularly in the field of midwifery. UNFPA is also engaged in hospital infrastructure rehabilitation as well as the provision of essential equipment and standardized guidelines.

Other important UNFPA initiatives include the Maternal Health Thematic Fund, Ending Child Marriage, Increasing Skilled Birth Attendants, the Campaign to End Fistula, and numerous partnerships tackling maternal and newborn mortality.

// ADOLESCENTS, YOUTH AND GENDER

UNFPA Sierra Leone pays close attention to young people as a crucial cohort needed to reach sustainable development. By advancing programmes and initiatives that help to expand their life choices, protect their rights, and contribute to their own development as well as that of their communities, UNFPA is investing in the next generation. Sierra Leone is in a prime position to reap the “Demographic Dividend”, which is proven to boost sustainable development.

Gender equality and women’s empowerment are essential to sustainable development; only when women and girls are able to fulfil their potentials can they fully contribute to the development of their nations. SDG 5, to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, is pivotal to the realization of every other SDG, as an empowered girl changes not only her life, but that of her family and her society.

UNFPA works closely with the Government, as well as with local NGOs, CSOs and other development agencies, to strengthen legislation pertaining to gender equality and to remove discriminatory clauses from Sierra Leone’s constitution. UNFPA also advocates for gender-sensitive data collection, and emphasises the integration of culturally sensitive approaches to end gender-based violence, including traditional practices that harm women such as Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting.

UNFPA also recognises the rights, perspectives and influence of men and boys, involving them in the promotion of gender equality and reproductive health, proving that women’s empowerment is the responsibility of everyone, not just women and girls.



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WHAT IS THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND?

As this cohort approaches adulthood, Sierra Leone’s growing youth population is a great opportunity for sustainable development. The “Demographic Dividend” is defined as a boost in economic productivity achieved by having proportionally more people of working age. The ability of young people to reach their potential (girls in particular) and for the employed to have fewer dependents (as a result of voluntary family planning) are prerequisites for the dividend. Sierra Leone, with nearly 46% of the population being under age 15, has the ability to reap this dividend by declining its fertility rate.

// POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

In line with the SDGs’ new emphasis on data, UNFPA Sierra Leone is committed to promoting data-driven change and developing capacity in data collection and analysis to support effective programmes. UNFPA provides the Government, other development partners and key stakeholders with relevant, reliable data and information, as a guide towards evidence-based development planning, policy formulation, service delivery, and monitoring and evaluation. UNFPA also supports the government and partners to develop the National Population Policy.

Alongside other UN agencies and development partners, UNFPA has been instrumental in building the technical and institutional capacities of Statistics Sierra Leone (SSL) in the production and dissemination of national statistical data. Prominent products of this initiative include the 2013 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), the 2015 Population and Housing Census (PHS), and the establishment of an Integrated Management Information System (IMIS).

// MAIN IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

- Aberdeen Women's Centre
- Capacare
- Fambul Initiative Network
- Haikal Foundation/Organization
- Health for All Coalition
- Marie Stopes Society SLE
- Matei Initiative Empowerment
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Social Welfare
- Ministry of Youth
- National HIV/AIDS Secretariat
- Office of the First Lady
- Options Consultancy Services
- Planned Parenthood Association SLE
- Restless Development
- Statistics Sierra Leone
- Women in Crisis Movement - SLE

// MAJOR DONORS



// LEADERSHIP

UNFPA Sierra Leone and its approximately 45 members of staff are led by Dr. Kim Eva Dickson, the Country Representative, who is supported by three Clusters Leads and an International Operations Manager.

Because everyone counts

United Nations Population Fund

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